

Editorial / Editorial

We live in a global scenario marked by deepening systemic crises. From the outbreak of new conflicts to the acceleration of ecological devastation, the persistence of imperialist-colonial wars, and abyssal social inequalities, conventional approaches to International Relations often reveal their limitations. Analyses focused on rational state actors or liberal ideals of cooperation prove insufficient to grasp the structural forces that move history.

In this context, *World Tensions* – a journal dedicated to disseminating theoretical and empirical studies on nations, the entities that legitimize the modern state, multilateral institutions, and the so-called “international community” – devotes a double issue to the theme “*Marxism and International Relations*.” Our purpose is to revisit and reassess, in light of contemporary challenges, a theoretical tradition that places the contradictions of the capitalist mode of production at the center of the analysis of the world system. Far from seeking a monolithic Marxism, the dossier explores its internal diversity and its ability to adapt in order to decipher the complexities of the 21st century.

To organize this broad panorama, the contributions have been divided into two complementary issues. Issue 46, “*Theoretical and Historical Foundations*,” delves into conceptual debates and long-term processes that shaped our modernity. Issue 47, “*Contemporary Analyses*,” applies these lenses to case studies and current geopolitical dynamics.

The first issue, “*Theoretical and Historical Foundations*,” opens with a metatheoretical reflection in the essay by Laura Palma and Lúcio Costilla, “*Filosofia popular y pensamiento crítico en tiempos oscuros*.” The authors explore the potential of critical thinking that emerges outside formal academic circles, a necessary counterpoint in periods of political and social obscurantism. The

dossier then moves into debates that seek to position Marxism within the discipline of International Relations itself.

Alán Ricardo Rodríguez Orozco traces the historical trajectory through which Marxism and critical geopolitics were gradually integrated into the IR field in the Americas, overcoming marginalization to assert themselves as legitimate and robust perspectives. Paulo Bittencourt and Rodrigo Duarte Fernandes dos Passos deepen this theoretical debate by examining alternative approaches to Kenneth Waltz's realism that emerged in the post-Cold War period. Their analysis focuses specifically on the contributions of the Gramscian approach, associated with Adam Morton, and the Trotskyist perspective of Justin Rosenberg, highlighting the productivity of the dialogue between these two authors for the contemporary Marxist sphere.

Seeking to expand interdisciplinary dialogue, Eduardo Tomankiewicz Secchi proposes an innovative articulation between Robert Putnam's two-level game theory and Poulantzas's approach to the state. Using the Doha Round of the World Trade Organization as a case study, the author investigates how analyzing domestic class fractions, both in Brazil and in Europe, can enrich foreign policy models. Rafael Vieira da Silva, in his article, offers a panoramic view of Marxist contributions to regionalism studies, arguing that the main strength of this perspective lies in its ability to connect phenomena of regional integration and globalization to the structural dynamics of capitalism that link them.

Closing this block of theoretical discussions, Kelvin Araújo Dias questions the absence of a Marxist Queer International Theory and explores its potential for the field. In a foundational text, the article problematizes the institution of the family as a pillar of capitalist heteropatriarchy and critically examines the imperialist use of human rights discourses, opening a new and necessary field of investigation.

A set of articles is dedicated to historical-structural analyses that elucidate the foundations of the capitalist international order.

Luiz Guilherme de Oliveira and Marco Antonio Meneses Silva return to the Industrial Revolution to analyze the rise of the

bourgeoisie in northern England. Combining structuralism and Marxism, they examine how wealth accumulation and liberal policies served to mitigate class conflict, consolidating a new historical bloc and transforming the British state into a central agent in shaping both a domestic and international hegemonic order.

Following this, Carlos Landim and Reginaldo Nasser offer a critical rereading of the new colonial order established after World War I. Their article challenges the traditional narrative that associates Wilsonian internationalism with the self-determination of peoples, arguing instead that the League of Nations, through the Mandate System, consolidated new forms of domination over peripheral nations, masking oppressive practices under an emancipatory discourse that also sought to contain the advance of socialist internationalism.

Bringing the analysis of power structures into the present, Luciana Ghiotto and Carla Poth investigate the “regulatory coherence” agenda promoted by international organizations. They argue that the homogenization of state regulations on a global scale is central to capital accumulation, as it accelerates the circulation of goods by reducing administrative costs and times, revealing the contradictory nature of the contemporary state, which acts simultaneously as a national regulator and a facilitator of transnational capital.

Building on this foundation, the second issue, *“Contemporary Analyses,”* turns to the application of the Marxist framework to current geopolitical phenomena and regional dynamics.

It begins with an interview by Mônica Dias Martins with Charlie Thame, who analyzes imperialism in the Greater Mekong sub-region through a Marxist lens. Thame emphasizes its economic essence (wealth drainage through unequal exchange), not merely its political-military dimension. He revitalizes Ruy Mauro Marini’s concept of sub-imperialism to explain how semi-peripheral countries such as Thailand, while globally subordinated, exploit neighboring economies (Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar) to resolve internal contradictions. His research shows that Thai and Vietnamese conglomerates are the

main beneficiaries of regional integration, deepening inequalities and reaffirming the centrality of the capital-labor relation in International Relations, as well as the relevance of sub-imperialism for understanding 21st-century dynamics of exploitation.

Olivia Bulla addresses the war of narratives with China as its pivot during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study uses this case to explore how Marxist thought can be adapted to analyze contemporary geopolitical and economic realities, in a context of profound epistemological and methodological crisis in the IR field.

Turning to one of today's most acute conflicts, Luiza Ferreira Odorissi analyzes Palestinian struggle and resistance against Israel's offensive in Gaza. Drawing on Antonio Negri's historical materialism and the concept of "multitude," she seeks to understand the power of collectives as insurgent, counter-hegemonic political-social subjects capable of constructing new subjectivities based on the "commons."

Boaventura Monjane examines the situation in Mozambique, a country with a strong Marxist-Leninist tradition. His article investigates the recent rise of an ideologically eclectic youth uprising, questioning the future of the country's economic and foreign policy and the possible return to, or definitive rupture with, its post-independence socialist heritage.

A significant set of articles in this second issue is dedicated to Latin America.

Ana Penido and Suzeley Kalil reconstruct Hugo Chávez's trajectory from his military career to the presidency of Venezuela. Combining literature review and interviews, they argue that Chávez is exemplary for discussing the military left and the role of the individual in history, as theorized by authors such as Quartim de Moraes and Plekhanov. Daniel Lemos Jeziorni addresses a central contradiction for the region, showing how capital transforms into ecological crisis. His work demonstrates the relevance of Marxism in reaching the root of this crisis and raises provocations about the crossroads facing Latin American economies, whose states deepen a reproduction pattern based on neo-extractivism.

Focusing on Brazil, João Montenegro da Silva Pereira Reis investigates the factors that led to the liberalization of the energy sector after 2016. His central hypothesis is that such liberalization resulted from a loss of the state's relative autonomy following the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff. He describes "revolving door" cases that illustrate the articulation between capitalists and political agents in favor of this agenda.

Finally, Gabriel de Siqueira Gil offers a materialist analysis of the development of international tourism. The article interprets the phenomenon within the capitalist mode of production and discusses the challenges for a critical political economy of tourism in the current stage of global accumulation, situating it within the dynamics of dependency and uneven development.

Taken together, the articles, essays, and interviews gathered in this thematic issue demonstrate not only the persistent relevance but also the intellectual vitality of Marxism as a tool for international analysis. The common thread is a shared refusal to accept the appearances of the political world as given, seeking instead their material, historical, and social determinations. At the same time, the dossier highlights a healthy internal pluralism – with Gramscian, Leninist, Trotskyist, Poulantzasian, autonomist, and queer perspectives, among others – that engage and contend with each other, enriching the diagnosis of the present.

The contributions presented here do not seek to offer definitive answers or a new dogma. On the contrary, their value lies in sharpening the analytical tools necessary to understand the structural roots of contemporary crises, reaffirming the task of critical theory not as providing prescriptive solutions, but as formulating the fundamental questions about the constitution of our time and the material conditions for the possibility of a different future.

We therefore invite our readers to an intellectual exercise that goes beyond the simple assimilation of content. Engagement with Marxist theory constitutes, in its essence, a form of praxis: critical reading refuses the mere interpretation of the world and its oppressions and instead devotes itself to the relentless search for the conceptual tools for its transformation. In this sense, the

articles, essays, and interviews that comprise the dossier are not meant as definitive solutions, but as pathways; not as conclusions, but as foundations for a new beginning. We hope that, by engaging with the multiple and at times divergent perspectives gathered here, each reader may sharpen their own analytical gaze to decipher the complex tensions of the present and, from them, interrogate the horizons of the future.

Happy reading!

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